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Economic Services Division

Committee on China

(Minutes of the Second Meeting - 1300 hours, 18 August 1954)

Present: All members, except [REDACTED] who was represented
by [REDACTED] S/CST.

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Two major subjects were discussed: (1) the functions of the Committee; and, (2) widespread floods in China.

Functions of the Committee

The opinion was expressed that the Committee could make its best contribution to the Division's activities at this stage by acting as a seminar in which all members could increase their background knowledge of China. In addition to the sharing of knowledge among the members, general deficiencies could be solved by inviting people with a particular competence from other divisions and offices to attend from time to time to discuss their subjects with us. Several of the proposals made at the first meeting with regard to greater source exploitation and liaison with people outside the Division were considered to be problems of the individual analysts rather than subjects for Committee action. A fear was also expressed that the Committee operations might result in more projects being laid on before the Committee as a group or the individual analysts were in a position to handle them. There was general agreement, however, as to the immediate usefulness of the Committee as a means of increasing the competence of the members in the area and its ultimate usefulness as a staff support body to Chief, D/S for all matters dealing with China and for liaison with other divisions and agencies on such matters.

Floods in China

The question was raised as to what contribution could be made by the Committee in the form of a Division Current Support Memorandum on the implications of the China floods. It was felt that there was not yet sufficient information to warrant a detailed analysis. [REDACTED] who is believed to have considerable material on this subject, was unable to be present, but it is expected that his material will be available shortly.

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[REDACTED] It was decided, however, that general statements of the implications of the floods for the economic sectors within our responsibility could be prepared by each member without a major research effort and without undue interference with other project deadlines. These statements will be combined for submission as a Division CSM.

Next meeting: 1315 hours, 26 August 1954, 2125 "M" Building.

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